

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08  
FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03  
SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 L-03 H-01 NSC-05  
SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 PA-01 PRS-01 AGRE-00 /095 W  
-----250822 039681 /17

R 241440Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5518

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY PETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECONGN EAGR, MZ

SUBJECT: LOCAL PRESS REPORTS FOOD SHORTAGES, LINES

1. DAILY NOTICIAS OF FEBRUARY 24 CARRIES THREE STORIES  
ON SERIOUS LACK OF BASIC FOODSTUFFS IN MOZAMBIQUE IN  
GENERAL AND MAPUTO IN PARTICULAR.

2. HEADLINE ARTICLE COVERED PRESIDENT MACHEL VISIT  
FEBRUARY 23 TO THE SUPERMARKETS AND STORES WHERE HE  
SAW VERY LONG LINES OF PEOPLE QUEUING TO PURCHASE  
WHATEVER WAS AVAILABLE. MACHEL SPOKE WITH SOME IN THE  
QUEUES AND HEARD THAT "EVERYWHERE THERE IS THE SAME  
STORY - THE LINES FORM AT DAWN, AND THAT EVERYTHING  
IS LACKING - SOAP, WHEAT, ONIONS, POTATOES, RICE,  
PEANUTS, MAIZE MEAL, MILK, SUGAR, COOKING OIL."  
ARTICLE QUOTED MACHEL SAYING "MANY THINGS LACKING, MANY  
LINES, MUCH TIME LOST. WE MUST FIND A MEANS  
TO ORGANIZE ALL THIS." THE PRESIDENT NOTED THE GOOD  
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SPIRITS OF THE CROWDS, AND STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE  
OF INCREASING PRODUCTION.

3. ANOTHER FRONTPAGE ARTICLE NOTE THAT MAIZE MEAL  
WAS BEING DISTRIBUTED FOR SALE IN MAPUTO FOR THE FIRST  
TIME IN OVER FIVE MONTHS. THE ARTICLE STRESSED HOW  
HAPPY THE PEOPLE ARE ONCE AGAIN TO BE ABLE TO BUY

THIS BASIC STAPLE.

4. AN EDITORIAL BLAMED THE "CRISIS OF CAPITALISM IN MOZAMBIQUE" FOR THE CURRENT SHORTAGES. THE ARTICLE NOTED THAT UNDER THE OLD BAD SYSTEM FOREIGNERS CONTROLLED THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD TO THE CITIES. NOW THEY ARE FLEEING, AND HAVE SABOTAGED EQUIPMENT AND FIELDS. ALSO, THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM WHICH WAS IN THE HANDS OF CAPITALISTS, HAS BROKEN DOWN, SO THAT LOCALLY PRODUCED GOODS CANNOT BE DISTRIBUTED NATIONALLY. THE ARTICLE STATED THAT THE CORRECT STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION - CREATION OF STATE FARMS, COMMUNAL VILLAGES, FORMATION OF COLLECTIVES, BUT "LIKE A YOUNG FRUIT TREE" IT TAKES TIME FOR THE FRUITS TO APPEAR. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDED THAT THE "STRUGGLE FOR

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION" DEMANDED GREAT SACRIFICES OF THE PEOPLE, BUT THE PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY PROVEN THEY CAN BEAR GREAT SACRIFICES IN A WORTHY CAUSE.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE FREQUENTLY REPORTED THE GROWING LACK OF BASIC FOODSTUFFS, WHICH IS NOW REACHING ALARMING PROPORTIONS, ESPECIALLY IN URBAN AREAS. THIS IS THE FIRST PUBLIC ADMISSION BY THE GPRM THAT

A SERIOUS FOOD SHORTAGE EXISTS. UP TO NOW THE GPRM HAS DONE VERY LITTLE TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS OTHER THAN MAKE EXHORTATIONS FOR SACRIFICE. IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THE PLACING OF A FEW SHORT-TERM PURCHASE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ORDERS FOR STAPLES ABROAD WILL BE MORE THAN A STOP-GAP MEASURE. WHEN THE IMPACT OF THE HEAVY FLOODING IN SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE MAKES ITSELF FELT IN THE MARKET-PLACE IN A FEW WEEKS THE SITUATION WILL BECOME EVEN MORE ACUTE.

6. JOAO COSME, NATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, ACKNOWLEDGED TO AMBASSADOR YESTERDAY THAT FOOD IN MAPUTO AREA IS VERY SCARCE, HAMPERING RELIEF EFFORTS IN FLOODED AREAS. HE SAID THAT TO MEET EMERGENCY NEEDS, GPRM HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO LOOK TO SOUTH AFRICA FOR FOOD DELIVERIES.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, FOOD SHORTAGE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977MAPUTO00185  
**Document Source:** CORE  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** LOCAL PRESS REPORTS FOOD SHORTAGES, LINES  
**TAGS:** ECON, EAGR, EGEN, MZ  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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